



SOCIAL PROGRESS

*Changing
America*

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Published by the Department of Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., to provide a forum for the church on subjects of social concern for Christians. It includes program resources, legislative developments, and guides to worship, study, and action for leaders of social action groups in local churches, presbyteries, synods, presbytery and synodical societies. Articles represent the opinions of the authors—not the official policy of the Department of Social Education and Action or of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

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CHANGING AMERICA

A Social Perspective for the Churches in Their Christian Life and Work

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From This Vantage Point...

THE hallmark of our time is change. Society always is in flux, but the transformations never have been so far-reaching for such large numbers of the world's people within so brief a time as in recent years. America, in its own way, is experiencing rapid changes.

We present here a study of some of the social changes that are taking place in American life, and of their bearing upon persons. This is an area of intense interest for our churches, because whatever affects persons, for good or bad, is thereby a matter of concern to all Christians.

This study was prepared by the staff of the Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of Churches. It is presented here with the permission of the executive officers of the Division, Dr. Arild Olsen and Dr. Edwin Espy and their remarkable team of associates in the various departments related to this important unit of the National Council of Churches. We have taken the liberty of abridging the original "unofficial staff paper" in order to bring it down to the size of our magazine. We believe that this editing has not seriously weakened the document.

We wish to express to Dr. Olsen and his co-workers our very sincere gratitude for preparing the study and for making it available to our readers.

The SEA Staff

CHANGING AMERICA

Introduction

CHANGE is necessary to growth, and orderly change in the direction of equity and justice is to be welcomed as a part of the social process. The attempt of this document will be to diagnose those changes in the society and culture of the United States which appear to have special significance in relation to the distinctive task of the churches.

Many of the important changes in modern American life have brought a change in the relationship between individuals and social groups. This basic fact provides the perspective for the social analysis that follows.

From a Christian standpoint, this raises the question as to what is happening to persons. For the Christian, personal well-being and social well-being are inextricably interwoven. A basic question which is posed by the new social situation is the issue of personal integrity and responsibility at a time when groups, associations, organizations, and societal structures assume many of the roles that formerly were performed by individuals. What is the nature of Christian responsibility, both personal and social, in such a setting?

In our complex society there are definite limitations upon what the individual can do. It is not enough to enjoin individual morality at a time when so many decisions are beyond the individual's power. There must also be a group morality, and the individual must be helped to function with integrity and responsibility as a part of the group.

Every member of society is automatically a member of several groups. He is born in a given community, he is a member of a particular race, he belongs to one or the other of the two sexes. As his life progresses, he comes more and more under the influence of various societal groupings. Into some of these he enters almost inescapably and perhaps unconsciously. In relation to others, there is a wide range of personal choice as to his group identifications. In his early years many of these choices are made for him by his family or others. Later, he may exercise more independent decisions. Yet it is only within certain limits that he can select the groups with which he is to be identified. He must try to be a Christian in some groups that consciously seek to be Christian and in many others that profess no such purpose.

The analysis that follows is made in the perspective of the foregoing comments. In general, the broad societal and cultural forces will be treated in section I of this study; the bearing of these forces upon the person will be examined in greater detail in section II; some guiding threads of the analysis will be summarized and the issues that they pose for the churches will be briefly stated in section III.

I

Social and Cultural Changes

Technology

A new mark of our culture is the growing dominance of technology in our personal and corporate lives.

The process by which goods and services are produced and made available is increasingly the result of the operations of mechanisms rather than the work of men. The work process, through feedbacks, computers, and other techniques is far more than the men whose work is a part of it.

Add to these new processes the impending development for peacetime uses of atomic, solar, and other new forms of physical energies, and the magnitude of their power exceeds the grasp of the imagination.

In a real sense, not the worker but the organization is productive. Even when organized into a working group, what each worker does is meaningless without what they all do. When man loses the sense of meaning in his work, the resultant spiritual vacuum creates a problem that goes deeper than mere morale. The sense of vocation is a basic ingredient to integrity and character.

Nor does the impact of technology end with the working day. Perhaps more pervasive, since it affects

worker and nonworker alike, and for all the hours of the day, is the increasing hold of technology upon the organization of daily life. This applies especially to the media of mass communication. In the realm of ideas, the centralization of channels of information is a force of incalculable power.

At the same time that technology develops the implements of mass influence, it develops an unprecedented opportunity to put this power to use. For a combination of economic and technological factors has created billions of new hours of leisure per year. In many industries we are on the threshold of a six-hour day; in some, the four-hour day is already a matter of serious consideration.

For a minority of workers in key positions, technology tends to upgrade in favor of needed skills, general education, and professional training; but for a larger number, it downgrades their jobs. The fact of downgrading, even where the wage scale remains the same, is one of the most difficult psychological problems the worker has to face.

The development of our physical environment through technology has not only increased our produc-

tivity and our leisure; men are now spending less and less time and energy as producers and have more time, money, and energy to spend as consumers. They are increasingly motivated by their interests as consumers. The new leisure, the new purchasing power, the new mass media for entertainment and education, and the less personal relationship of millions of workers to their jobs create a new psychology among the American people which represents a great potential for human growth.

Economics

The unprecedented productivity and economic prosperity of the United States spring not alone from technological developments, but from a complex of factors too numerous to describe here. It appears highly probable that the American economy will continue to have the capacity to meet the needs of the people.

The economy, however, is based increasingly upon the creation and satisfaction of wants and desires. In a dynamic technological society some desires soon become needs. Refrigeration, which was once a luxury, is now a necessity.

We must also remember that there still are millions of persons in need of food, clothing, and housing. There are millions more in need of better health facilities, educational opportunities, and other benefits that an economy of abundance should make available.

Leisure in itself is a stimulus to consumer consciousness. Not only are more goods desired, but more services as well. An economy geared

to wants devotes relatively more of its human energies to services than an economy geared to needs.

The labor force, a large segment of the nation's population, has become a primary target of modern salesmanship. Mass production must assume mass consumption. What technology is to dynamic productivity, advertising is to dynamic consumption.

Another important development is the maximizing of the role of the voluntary group. Alongside the growth of government has been a marked growth of voluntary associations: business groups, labor organizations, farm associations, cooperatives, veterans' and professional organizations, health and insurance associations, and others.

These free associations are in effect "private governments" in various spheres of the common life. The extent to which they afford opportunity for individual growth, participation, and responsibility is a moot question. They may give the individual a new sense of security and community, or they may submerge him in their large, impersonal operations (e.g., labor unions and management groups).

Have we reached the proper balance of power and function between big government, big industry, and big labor? In a democratic society, none of these groups should be allowed to control our economy.

Nor must we assume that our prodigious economic productivity is an unmixed blessing for all our people. There has been growth in the so-called middle class, but many are as far as ever from this coveted status.

There are persisting pockets of poverty in our society. This applies also to many professional workers, small businessmen, artisans, and others who are self-employed. Do they gain or lose from the prevailing prosperity?

Other issues emerge: What are the long-range social results of millions of women absenting themselves from their homes in order to share in the benefits of available high wages? What is the spiritual significance of the stimulation of desire for physical possessions as the measure of the good life? What is the Christian view of an economy of abundance in a world of want and starvation?

Population

Of over-all importance in the American scene is the upsurge in our population. The major increases have been at the two ends of the age scale: among children and among the aging. One third of the population, or approximately 54,500,000, are now under eighteen years of age. This is an increase of 13,000,000 since World War II, and the number is expected to reach 63,000,000 by 1965. There are 13,500,000 over sixty-five, and the number of these is rapidly increasing. The changes of age distribution bring changes of need and interest.

In the United States, we have considered ourselves a "melting pot" of a variety of national and cultural strains, with their concomitant differences of race and religion. This cultural pluralism is not without its problems.

Perhaps the most striking manifestation of our pluralism is in our religious differences. Our most char-

acteristic basis of population division, according to some social scientists, is religious affiliation—Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish.

Yet one of our greatest assets is this very cultural and religious diversity. As the United States continues to consolidate its national life, one of the basic issues will be the proper relation of the whole to its parts and the parts to the whole.

One of the greatest transformations in American life has been our shift from an agricultural to an industrial and commercial economy, with its attendant shift of population from rural to urban life. Sixty-five per cent of our people now live in cities and suburbs, and it is expected that the figure will increase to 75 per cent. The phenomenon of suburbia is itself a manifestation of our pluralistic culture. Most suburban communities are largely of one economic level. These communities seldom are interracial.

We are divided also, perhaps more than ever, between the privileged and the underprivileged. A larger proportion of our people have become economically comfortable. We have referred to the pockets of poverty in the United States. New arrivals from other lands, and Puerto Rico, imported laborers from Mexico, migrant laborers, unskilled workers, racial minorities unable to use their skills—these are the disinherited of today.

Ours is a varied culture also in its geographical differences. Certain mental attitudes can be associated with particular regions. This is an important element of American life.

Another factor of increasing importance in the American population is the rapid growth of specialization. Whether in skilled labor, in management, in the professions, in government, in the academic world, or wherever one may look, specialization is rampant. It should be encouraged, but it does not require the kind of compartmentalization that is becoming characteristic of it.

Large segments of the population in all the categories we have mentioned are frequently on the move. The number who have changed residence in the past twenty-five years is incredible. Some have settled down in new places. Others have developed the habit of transiency. Such mobility has never been equaled, apart from disaster or persecution, in an established culture. It holds unmeasured possibilities for either enrichment and advance or rootlessness and irresponsibility.

Health and Welfare

Housing—A basic human need is adequate housing. There still are 5,000,000 nonfarm dwellings that are beyond repair, and 20,000,000 more that are only in fair condition. The 10,000,000 new units built during the past decade have not caught up with the need. The shortage is critical for lower- and middle-income groups and for racial minorities. The growth of American suburbia, bringing a relative decentralization of population within large urban areas, is a development of unprecedented proportions.

There are conflicting ideas concerning Federal participation in housing programs. Another issue on which there are wide differences of

philosophy and practice relates to racial integration.

Health—The social magnitude of America's health problems often is not recognized. For a land of physical abundance and technological proficiency, it may seem anomalous that we are confronted with so much ill-health, in spite of the conquest of diseases and ailments that a generation ago were a scourge. But the very fact of longer life increases illness. About 3,000,000 people have chronic disorders that are disabling.

It is a striking fact that an increasing proportion of our health difficulties arise from the strains of American life. Mental illness is a case in point. The tempo of an activistic culture, the pressures of social demands, the problems of ethics that are posed by a pluralism of values—these are among the forces that shatter personalities. Many of the same factors are in no small measure responsible for the rising incidence of alcoholism.

It is understandable that the medical profession should turn increasingly to preventive measures. Thus medicine, like religion, will be inextricably involved in the social scene if it is to perform its task.

This has brought the development not only of psychotherapy but of other forms of therapy, and new uses of drugs. There have been drastic changes in the nursing profession, with growing emphasis upon an understanding of mental stress.

The population has grown far more rapidly than the facilities for dealing with the people's health. There is a serious, often a tragic,

shortage of general and mental hospitals and nursing homes, as well as of nurses, social workers, and other personnel related to health problems.

It is understandable that there should be increasing pressure for Government involvement in plans of health insurance, medical research, aid to hospitals, and various group practices in the medical field.

This is an area of tremendous unmet need. The best thinking and resources of all groups concerned must be mobilized to solve the problem. With the great progress that has been made in medical science, the health of the people may be one of the most exciting areas of advance in American life during the period ahead.

Crime—An area of the American scene that long has been a Government concern is that of crime. Even the worst offender has enjoyed the protection of our legal processes. There are intimate connections between the processes of law and those of voluntary groups, crime prevention, and the rehabilitation of offenders. The standard of ethics in the public mind, in business and in all phases of society, has a bearing upon the incidence of crime. Moreover, the public morality shades imperceptibly into the public immorality. Public apathy can mean acquiescence. Lowered standards of personal practice lead to lowered expectations of public integrity.

Of particular concern at present is the prevalence of juvenile delinquency. It arises not alone from economic factors, but is rooted in deeper factors of social conflict, broken homes, personal insecurity,

elevation of false standards of conduct and recognition. Yet its high incidence in blighted areas is significant. Juvenile delinquency presents a case of growing responsibility for the churches. Too often the attempts to control delinquency are offered in too simple terms—clinics, or recreational opportunities, or better schools, or other expedients. Society seems unready to deal with the complex factors that enter into delinquency. It sanctions shoddy business and political practices as being the way of the world.

Another pressing crime problem is the treatment of ex-offenders and parolees. No other nation has a ratio of recidivism nearly so high as that of the United States. Most of the existing penal institutions give small encouragement to rehabilitation and reform. Worse is the treatment of the ex-offender when he is seeking a new start.

Both Government and private agencies are alert to these problems. Facilities for caring for prisoners and delinquents will be increased and bettered.

Tax-supported Welfare Programs—We have witnessed a rapid development of public social welfare programs. Initially these programs were ameliorative and conducted by state and local units of government. With the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935, major responsibility was shifted to the Federal Government, and ameliorative programs began to be replaced by social insurance.

In 1930, social welfare accounted for 4.1 per cent of the national in-

come; in 1953, it was 8.3 per cent. In 1930, private welfare programs accounted for 50 per cent of the total spent; in 1950, only 27 per cent.

Among major Government programs, only general assistance remains the sole responsibility of state and local Governments. In 1955, 370,000 persons were receiving such general assistance, whereas about 7,000,000 persons were receiving Old-Age and Survivors Insurance benefits.

It may be expected that Federal programs will continue to expand to provide reasonable financial security for all. At the same time, voluntary welfare programs of industry, labor, service clubs, and other groups have expanded.

Education

A disturbing current trend is the number of attacks upon the public schools. These attacks come from many sources which cannot be enumerated here. They will not succeed if the citizenry is sufficiently alert and concerned. Great dedication will be necessary if buildings, equipment, and teachers are to be supplied in sufficient number and quality to meet the crying need. The substantial weakening of our public schools would be a body blow to our way of life.

We are not clear as to the purpose of public-school education. It is a sign of progress that the objectives of public education are being widely debated. Should the schools inculcate moral and spiritual values? In a pluralistic culture, how much should a particular religion be in evidence in the public schools? What about released time for the teaching

of religion by the churches? What encouragement should be given to parochial schools, especially through state or Federal financial aid, direct or indirect?

What is the purpose of public secondary education? Numerous changes are taking place at the secondary level. Some of them are designed to prepare students more adequately for college. Some are geared to two years in a terminal junior college. Some are intended to make high school itself the terminus of education. How well do the various plans prepare for civic and social responsibility?

Higher education is so vast and diverse a subject that it can scarcely be touched upon here. We must note at least the growing influence upon education of science and technology. Yet there is a strong countermovement to restore the humanities and social sciences to a more equal place. There is a growing concern that higher education should be a channel for understanding and communicating the culture in its deepest meanings.

Related to this is the problem of compartmentalization in higher education. The modern university has become a multiversity in which students grow farther and farther apart the longer they are together. There is a widespread awakening to the need of integration in education.

Let us remind ourselves, however, that not all education is through formal schooling. The forces that shape people's minds outside of school hours and after their schooling is completed are fully as impor-

tant as their school experiences. Family life, social activities, economic circumstances, political affiliation, participation in voluntary groups, community mores, job experiences, reading habits—these and countless other influences combine to mold the individual mind. A major emerging fact in our society is the tremendous impact of organized media of mass communication.

Adult education is more and more needed. We have noted the increase in the adult population; the increase in leisure time; the increasing tempo of life, with its requirement of keeping up with what is going on; the large number of voluntary groups which are potential instruments of education; and the increasing exposure to stimuli that lead to the desire for more education.

Nor can we overlook the educational enterprise of the churches themselves. In no other land are there so many schools, colleges, and seminaries under church auspices. An encouraging current development is the growing concern of the churches for the academic quality and Christian orientation of their schools and colleges, and the adequacy of their programs of theological training.

Racial and Cultural Relations

As a concomitant of the social revolution that is occurring in the world, color has become a dominant factor in the national and world consciousness. World opinion, in the main, is moving in the direction of acceptance of persons and groups on the basis of worth.

An understanding of the changes

in American attitudes toward racial and cultural groups can be attained only on the basis of an appreciation of numerous developments. Factors such as the depression of the thirties, improved economic opportunities for all persons today, population movements, comradeship in two world wars, the growth of influence of the countries of darker-skinned races, the spreading results and increasing availability of education, and the efforts of labor unions, mass media, the theater, sports, civic organizations, educational institutions, churches—these and other developments have steadily changed the climate of public opinion.

In relation to the Negro, the principal racial minority in America, the most dramatic and perhaps important recent development was the decision of the United States Supreme Court in May, 1954, that segregation in the public schools is unconstitutional. Some other areas, such as higher education, public transportation, employment practices, entertainment, restaurants, and hotels are moving with varying degrees of speed toward integration.

True integration will go deeper than "desegregation." It is not simply a negative concept, removing present barriers that are used to impose segregation; it is a positive, dynamic concept looking toward a relationship in which persons interact across racial lines as part of a cohesive grouping.

It is of particular importance to recognize the economic factor in relation to integration. Economic emancipation is essential if rights and opportunities in other areas are to be realized.

Note should be taken of the part played by the churches in interracial relations. The story is not an even one. Some segments of the church have done better than others. At some times and places, the church has been ahead of other groups in the community; at other times and places, it has been somewhat less progressive.

Fundamental changes have taken place within the minority groups themselves. Not only have they become increasingly prepared, by education and otherwise, for their rightful role in an integrated American society, but they have undergone visible changes sociologically. The Japanese-American community has been widely dispersed and diversified as a result of relocation during World War II. Negroes have migrated in large numbers to the north and west and to the urban centers. Increasing numbers of American Indians are moving to urban areas. A great new Puerto Rican concentration has arisen in New York City. These developments represent both progress and problems.

The judicial developments of the last three years have far-reaching social and cultural consequences. Indeed, the importance of the Supreme Court decisions derives partly from the fact that they reflect the impact of social theory and applied social science upon judicial thinking.

These recent developments have implications beyond the field of racial and cultural relations. They represent a forward move in the mission of the American people to resolve the problems of freedom and equality in a pluralistic culture.

Freedom

First, let us examine some issues of freedom in the field of religious liberty.

The concept of separation of church and state in the United States is a confused doctrine among the people generally and certainly among Protestants. There is no agreement on such questions as that of an embassy at the Vatican, or aid to parochial schools.

A manifestation of the church-state issue that does not reach the attention of the average citizen is the nature of our relationships with the Governments of other nations. At the level of official American policy, particularly in relation to the Latin countries, it is essential that our trade agreements and other arrangements with them not acquiesce in denials of religious liberty.

There is particular division within Protestantism on the issue of religion in the public school. This involves increasingly our relations with our Jewish and Roman Catholic friends.

How far can separation go without a disservice to religion itself? There are a growing number of areas of American life in which Government directly or indirectly subsidizes religious worship and nurture: tax exemption for churches and other religious institutions; Government assistance to hospitals, colleges, welfare agencies, and other enterprises in which the churches are involved; the growing number of chaplaincies (Armed Services, prisons, and so forth).

Another manifestation of the issue

is the movement to identify the national Government with a religious position. Should the churches favor or oppose such proposals as the so-called Christian amendment, religious phrases on our currency, a religious phrase on our stamps or in our salute to the flag, and the position of the national flag in our churches?

What about state legislation in relation to adoption practices, planned parenthood, and other social and medical questions that have religious implications?

Sometimes religious and social freedom is denied by the practice of racial segregation at the very heart of the church's life—in its worship.

The Protestant churches must also think seriously about their relation to confessional minority groups within the household of the Christian faith. In particular, are we as mindful as we ought to be of the Eastern Orthodox churches within our fellowship?

Secondly, let us consider some issues of freedom in the civil and political order. America has stood for the free market of ideas. There has been room for dissent and non-conformity in the exercise of freedom of speech, press, and association, based on the conviction that the democratic community itself is strengthened by these freedoms. Today, however, we are subjected to many pressures to conformism. Some of these may be minor and insignificant, but the pressure is a more serious problem when it extends to loyalty oaths, censorship, and denials of civil rights.

An important factor is the prob-

lem of national security in a world of tension. At a time of danger and uncertainty, there is a tendency to suspect dissent and nonconformity.

There is the danger that persons with a rigid view of conformity will seize the national spotlight for reasons of self-interest. Such persons usually can gain a following. The phenomenon that some people have labeled McCarthyism enjoyed a period of dangerous power in American life. Undoubtedly its decline is of significance, but perhaps it is only as a movement centered in a particular person that it has retreated. The mentality may be more widespread than we know.

Another factor is the mood that stresses economic security. Emphasis on security tends to create a climate conducive to inertia and antagonism toward social change.

Still another factor is the high priority given today to consumer acceptance. In many industries, as well as in the advertising of most products over mass communication media, a premium is put upon the non-controversial character not only of what is said or written but of who says or acts.

We must be mindful of the extension of the military into our institutions: (1) its extension in numbers, as seen in the size of our military establishment and the Selective Service; (2) its extension in time, through the Reserves Act; (3) its extension into our economic life, through the contracts of the Defense Department with private industry, accompanied by a screening of those engaged in sensitive categories of employment; and (4) its extension

into the educational processes through the vast grants for research by the military to universities.

Civic and Political Life

The principal change of civic consciousness in recent years has come from the depersonalization of community relationships, especially in the urban centers. This depersonalization has led to a frequent abdication of responsibility on the part of the individual citizen. As a consequence, the level of municipal government has been especially low.

The small interest in political activity on the local level has resulted in the remote control of political parties (with much incompetence and some corruption). Political activity, instead of carrying distinction and respect, has assumed a taint of disrepute. Even the diplomatic service has lost much of its prestige and appeal.

In these circumstances, it is difficult to enlist people of ability and integrity for political leadership. It is also difficult to get the majority of the people to study the issues in a manner commensurate with their importance and complexity.

Apart from political and governmental activity as such, there is a wide range of civic activity for the individual citizen. In no other country are there so many free associations organized for social, cultural, and welfare objectives. Here again, especially in metropolitan areas, it usually is a small proportion of the population that takes leadership in the community. In the country at large, the middle class is most given to joining voluntary civic groups.

International Relations

We often confuse the international conflict between the two great power blocks with the more basic ferment among the underdeveloped peoples which cuts across East-West tensions. Great segments of the world's population are in a state of social and political revolution which goes to the root of their life. It is a revolution for the dignity of the human being, for political independence, for freedom, justice, and equity, for racial and cultural equality, and for participation in the fruits of the productive forces of the world. During the past decade, 700 million people have been freed from colonial status to statehood, leaving only 170 million, mostly in Africa, who still are non-self-governing.

It is not our object here to discuss international relations as such, but to consider their impingement upon American life. That the present conflict will continue in some form for a considerable time may be expected.

Economically, our current prosperity is intimately geared to military preparedness. A sudden acceleration or a sudden decline of the military program would mean drastic readjustments. On the world level, it is calculated that the resources now devoted to arms are equal to the total economic product of Western Europe.

Psychologically, either the removal or the sharp intensification of the present pervading anxiety would change the mood of the people. A relaxation internationally would reduce tensions in personal, cultural,

and civic-political relationships, and hopefully would speed the removal of many present threats to freedom.

The very possession of the power to commit race suicide by nuclear weapons is a new fact of human life. Never before has such a grim possibility, with its attendant responsibility, had to burden the mind of man. On the other hand, the new power may be a great good. Not only is it forcing people to think responsibly about international relations, but the peaceful uses of nuclear energy will be a boon to mankind.

The phenomenon of military preparedness will obviously be conditioned by the international situation. If it should become possible to release for constructive civilian purposes even a half of the tremendous energies now dedicated to the military, the consequences would stagger our imaginations.

One of the most tragic aftermaths of the Second World War has been the displacement of millions of persons from their homelands. The United States and other lands have a responsibility to help resettle the refugees and other victims of war. The freer flow of goods and the exchange of persons (students and others) are similarly in the interest of world understanding.

Relations between the economically favored nations and the underdeveloped areas are a matter of particular urgency. The average per capita income of two thirds of the world's population is only one twentieth of that in the United States. The progress already made in technical

assistance to underdeveloped areas has been sufficient to show the great development that would be possible through an extension of the program.

The unprecedented increase of population, particularly in the less developed countries, will confront the world with the need for a vast practical program of human sustenance. In 1900 there were 1½ billion people in the world; today there are 2½ billion. By 1980 it is expected that there will be 3½ to 4 billion, with most of the increase in Asia and Africa.

The phenomenon of American abundance, particularly in agriculture, will face our nation with a wide range of urgent issues. What are our responsibilities in relation to the use of our growing surpluses? What is a just and reasonable level for American foreign aid?

In the years ahead these underdeveloped countries, particularly the great populations of Asia, will call for more and more of our international attention, politically, economically, socially, and culturally. This attention must be based on a relationship of equality, not of superiority. Practically all the newly freed nations are darker-skinned peoples. They are observing America carefully, not only in its attitudes toward them, but in its outlook and practices in its treatment of minority groups in the United States itself.

America has had to assume a new role of international leadership. The total population is summoned to a new breadth of view about the world role of America and about the international implications of what have been regarded as domestic issues.

II

What Is Happening to Persons?

For the Christian, the ultimate ingredient in social analysis is not the structure or the process or the trend, but the person. What are the effects of social phenomena and the spirit of our times in the lives of individual people?

In looking at individuals, we must remember that a person is never an island. He is what he is in interaction with other persons. Especially from the Christian perspective, a person is fully a person only as he partakes with others in the experience of community. The person must be seen as a part of the groups that help to mold him and that he helps to mold.

The Person in His Work

We have noted the tremendous growth of technology and automation not only in industry but in other phases of daily work. The worker is removed increasingly from the primary environment of nature to the secondary environment of artifact. Heretofore this secondary environment has tended to supplement man as a worker, but now it tends to supersede him. Even in agriculture, the man is at work with machines, and only secondarily with the process of growth.

In a real sense, not the worker but the organization is productive. What each worker produces is meaningless without what they all do. Frequently the individual never sees the finished product, or the relation of his part of the process to other parts. Worker morale becomes less a matter of sat-

isfaction in his work and more a matter of his attitudes toward those for whom and with whom he works.

Thus the relation of the person to the group becomes even more important than formerly. In this relationship he finds much of his significance and develops his creative powers. Some would even say that the only legitimate motivations in much of modern labor are the development of a sense of human community with fellow workers and the consciousness that one is earning a livelihood for his family.

On the other hand, it is held by some observers that the possibilities of a sense of achievement and satisfaction in one's work are as great as ever. The feeling of significance, they contend, derives not so much from the ability to control a particular creative act from its inception to its completion, but rather from

the sense of having a significant even if small part in a great enterprise.

The new relationship between the individual and the group in labor is illustrated by the statement of a workman to a reporter in a strike situation of great tension: "No one has the right to work there now. The day of the individual is over. It's the rule of the majority—and the majority voted strike." Whatever the merits of the particular situation, this is group decision-making in operation. Management probably reached its decisions also on a group basis.

Thanks to a combination of the labor movement, enlightened management, legislation, technology, American abundance, and other factors, the lot of the workingman in America has been dramatically improved—in the conditions and hours of work, in pay, in security, in fringe benefits, and in other respects. Yet the development of the great power blocs of management and labor poses important questions in terms of human values. Will the material gains of both worker and employer be matched by an equal sense of social responsibility?

More basically, what is the relation of technology, depersonalization, and concentration on security to the sense of significance and satisfaction in daily work? What is the bearing of these factors on the feeling of Christian vocation in earning one's livelihood?

Another result of automation is its effect on the self-respect and sense of significance of the many workers whose jobs, formerly calling for certain skills and initiative, have now

been downgraded. The abilities that a man possesses cannot always be fully exercised. The rapid changes resulting from automation also make it difficult for a young man to train for a particular field of work, or even to decide what field to enter. Thus automation, with all its human contributions, also brings human frustrations.

A special problem which concerns the masses of workers only indirectly is that of the "serving professions." We must produce the specialists, the thinkers, and the creators who will cause our technology to serve us and not to master us.

The Person in His Leisure

Not only is there vastly more leisure than formerly, but our society is developing structures that tend to determine how one's leisure is to be used. Not only are the mass media highly successful in the inclusiveness of their coverage, but they often add to the process of depersonalization. The stress in moving pictures, for example, is upon technical improvement and extravaganza, frequently to the neglect of significant ideas.

The mass media, moreover, often call for little creative response on the part of the listener or viewer. He will have his inner reactions, but he has no opportunity to participate. His role is largely passive.

On the other hand, the mass media are a blessing to millions of people. They have brought a new dimension and enrichment to many lives through programs of education, music, current issues, theater, sports, and other areas. The issue is not whether the mass media in them-

selves are good or bad, but what use is made of them.

Two frequent characteristics of the mass media leisure-time programs call for attention. One is the materialistic outlook. There is unrelenting pressure to buy. The good life is measured by the abundance or quality of one's possessions. The cult of salesmanship intrudes into the inner sanctum of one's hours of leisure. What does this do to the old-time virtues of thrift, respect for property, moderation in consumption? The pressure to buy raises many ethical problems for socially sensitive people.

The second characteristic is the pressure to mass conformity. Again largely for economic reasons, the effort often is to strike the level of program appeal that will assure the largest audience. Leisure becomes a channel through which first to discover the interests of the majority of the people and then to mold the opinions of the rest to bring them into the accepted range of outlook. The pressure to conformity not only blankets the leisure hours but extends to attitudes about job, moral standards, education, politics, religion, and life as a whole.

It is gratifying that there are signs of a strong countermovement of individual and group initiative in the constructive use of leisure. It must also be noted that the positive potential of the mass media for educational and cultural purposes is limitless. From the standpoint of Christian values, there is as great a need for a sense of Christian vocation in the use of leisure as in the pursuit of one's livelihood.

The Person in His Family

The family as the basic social unit is the place where social change in its effect upon persons must be examined more closely. There is a great revival of concern for family life in America. Privileged young couples in a position to offer advantages to their children are bearing more children than in recent decades. The relocation of entertainment in the home through radio and especially television, while it entails many problems about the quality of some of the programs as well as about family harmony, does draw the family together. More attention is being given to family relations through school and community activities, and churches increasingly are focusing on the family as a unit rather than in its segregated parts. Amidst the strain and stress of our time, the family on the whole continues to be a haven of security and the pre-eminent place for growth of the person as person.

Yet the distressing facts of family disintegration must also be faced. The permanence of the marriage bond no longer is taken for granted. The approach to marriage often is tentative and experimental. The loss of the expectation of permanence is attributable to many factors. The relaxation of attitude by many churches, the easing of divorce restrictions on grounds of humanity, sympathy, and realism—these are among the intangible factors. More visible are the following causes: the increasing tension of modern living; the urbanization of society, with its centrifugal effect on the interests and activities of the family as a unit; the

inadequacy of housing, especially for lower-income groups; the widespread transiency and lack of community roots of many American families; the frequent absence of the mother from the home as a wage earner, leading to the widespread acceptance of the two-income family as normal; the consequent economic independence of the wife from the husband; the high incidence of alcoholism; the freedom with which married persons develop relationships outside marriage.

In the complex emotional involvement of family life it is hard to distinguish cause from effect. The manifest fact is that family life in a great many American homes is under tension, and that the consequences in the lives of millions of people are devastating. The precious right of children to be nurtured in a home of love and equanimity and security is far too often denied, with resulting emotional scars that may not reveal themselves for years to come. Even if a home is not "broken," the effects of tension upon the children may be equally bad or worse. And in many homes where the marital relationship is excellent, the intrusion of outside pressures upon the children may lead them to profound unhappiness and insecurity.

The very fact of urbanization increases the tensions under which all persons live. The relative anonymity and impersonality of city life often produce feelings of loneliness and insecurity. Many persons seek significance and their own brand of independence by developing a "hard shell" which may obstruct enlight-

ened progress. Materialistic goals inspire overly aggressive behavior and anxiety. Standardized jobs, schools, and recreation sometimes are matched by standardized homes. The one place where people should grow up to be themselves loses its individuality. It becomes increasingly difficult to see one's self as a responsible and creative individual made in God's image.

The anxieties and stresses of modern life, as we have seen earlier, lead in many cases to abnormal or pathological expression. The high incidence of mental illness, when it manifests itself within the life of a family, is a particularly serious threat to the stability of the home. The essential nature of the family as a community of love and tranquility is exposed to attack by what sometimes seem to be demonic forces. The individual members of the family cannot remain unaffected in their deepest natures, and the lives of the children especially may be warped by the experience.

If persons are to grow as persons, where in our mass society is this going to occur if not in our homes? This is perhaps the greatest spiritual challenge before the American people.

The Person in His Community

All the foregoing involves the person as a citizen of the community. We have referred to depersonalization and urbanization. We must also remember the great mobility of much of our population. The increasing complexity and fluidity of life make it difficult for the individual to make decisions whose effects in the life of

the community he or anyone else can see. Participation in the community often results in ethical ambiguities and dilemmas. The frequent reaction is to retreat into inactivity and non-participation, leaving the responsibility to others.

The tendency in America to let someone else or some group assume our community responsibility for us is a threat to our civic and political way of life. Our escape into non-participation is an illusory freedom, for by default we are enabling someone else to make our decisions and determine our life in relation to the community as a whole.

If we are not responsible in overt civic and political decisions, we are likely not to be responsible in asserting our convictions in the realm of ideas, or in defending the right of dissent for others. While complexity requires a high degree of centralization, it also requires as a counterbalance a vocal and self-determining local community in accordance with our American tradition of personal and political values.

Recent investigations have disclosed how the dealings of crime affect the lives of all of us, whether we realize it or not. Here is a problem that can and must be tackled in the local community. While many problems of our times do not seem to lend themselves to local treatment, crime is in large part a local phenomenon. This includes juvenile delinquency, which entails fateful issues for thousands of promising youth.

Crime, delinquency, mental illness, alcoholism—these are personal problems which carry a social

stigma. One of the distinctive tasks of Christians is to approach the persons involved in these difficulties as persons, not as criminals or delinquents or alcoholics. It is in our local community, where primary person-to-person contacts are possible, that we have the opportunity to deal with them as human beings.

The Person in His Nation and World

The nation and the world impinge on our individual lives in a degree unimagined a generation ago. The anxiety in the lives of many persons is conditioned in no small measure by international tensions. Nationally, the affairs of government affect us as never before in times of so-called peace. We enjoy the prospect of Federal Social Security benefits. We share in the use of public buildings and other facilities made possible by Federal funds. Numerous welfare institutions benefit from Federal assistance. Millions of our population benefit from Federal reforestation, flood control, and public power projects. The military reaches directly or indirectly into the lives of most Americans. Unprecedented numbers of peacetime citizens are on the Federal payroll.

It is perhaps an anomaly that at a time when national government has penetrated our lives so deeply, we should be so reluctant to share in determining its policies. How to develop a greater sense of personal responsibility for determining the course of our national political life is one of the great problems of our time.

Some historians have concluded that a once-felt sense of destiny and

of vocation in the American nation as a whole now seems to have disappeared, so that security and ease have taken the place of the sense of national mission. It is contended that we have lost our passion for human revolution and even for freedom. Others argue that we now are recapturing our sense of national and world responsibility. In either case, not only must people exercise their political duties as good citizens, but people of ability and integrity should make themselves available for the public service.

A more subtle personal problem is that of the individual who feels ineffective and frustrated because the great decisions are so far beyond his control. He must learn the importance of apparently minor decisions in his own voting precinct. His vote on a local farm or waterways issue may have international ramifications. He participates in many of the great issues of our time.

The individual should also be helped to see the outreach of his economic decisions. What is the Christian ethic for consumption in an economy of abundance set in a world of varying degrees of poverty? It well may be that this is a new realm for exploration by Christians.

There is need for a critical re-examination of the ethical responsibility of the individual in the common life, made necessary by the increasing complexity, size, and importance of social structures. Persons must be helped to understand what it means to participate responsibly in group decisions, whether political, economic, or social, and

also to react in an ethically responsible way to decisions set up so often by an anonymous social process. It is of equal importance to study and encourage ways by which this social process itself will increasingly widen participation by individuals.

The Person in His Culture

All the foregoing is a reflection of a total culture. There is need for "wholistic" thinking as we survey our contemporary scene. There remain a number of areas, however, which in their impact on the person we may designate under the general category of culture.

Brief mention must be made of the great mobility of our population, which has both a broadening and an unsettling impact on the individual. He gains in perspective, but he loses his roots. The wide range of voluntary associations is another distinctive characteristic of America that affects the individual person. It is one of the greatest strengths of our social and cultural life. Yet it may lead a person to great opportunity for self-realization or it may leave him by the wayside as apparently unwanted and unneeded.

A subtle problem of basic cultural faith confronts many Americans. For some there is a sense of discontinuity and meaninglessness in history. For many of these the American dream, if it ever existed, has been punctured. Hence, they forsake national and personal standards and develop fears and frustrations. On the other side are those who are overconfident and prideful about our social, cultural, political, and economic system: Everything

big we have undertaken has succeeded; we have made good use of our freedom; we must continue to extol success, standing, rating; our only problem is to keep abreast of our inevitable progress. These are ever-present contrasts in our socio-cultural climate.

Life in the United States presents a striking paradox also in the realm of education. No other country affords the possibility of so much education for so many. The massiveness of the educational enterprise is steadily increasing. Nowhere else in the world is there ready access to so much information. Yet in this country a smaller proportion of the people read the newspapers than in several European countries.

Moreover, the character of the education offered through our various media does not always contribute to the culture or even to an understanding of the culture. A person can be formally "educated" in our technological society and have little understanding of the world about him. This is particularly true in relation to many of our specialized institutions. In the realm of informal education, the rank and file of the people do not take advantage of what is available to them. Many of our channels of mass communication regard their educational and cultural function as a very low second behind the first objective of audience appeal and profit.

Again, there is a profound anomaly in the fact of our pluralism. We have analyzed our pluralism in social terms. In personal terms, we are likely to extol the virtues of our many-faceted cultural

heritage, and at the same time make life difficult for the various minorities upon whom much of the pluralism depends.

Another facet of our diversity is our highly developed specialization. Again, it is the individual who is central. In a man's daily work, there is a decreasing number of jobs in which one person performs the whole task. The lack of wholeness in his work contributes to a lack of wholeness in his personality. He is denied the creative opportunity that belonged to the village smith in an earlier generation. He is cut off from effective communication with other persons in other fields. The more he specializes, the more he is isolated. This is true in academic life as well as in the industrial, business, and professional worlds.

It becomes increasingly difficult in these circumstances for two individuals who live in widely separated mental worlds to share common concepts and goals for the total culture. Uniformity is not, of course, a desideratum in a democratic society and especially in a highly pluralistic one. But some unifying loyalty transcending private differences is highly essential. There must be a common bond through some common set of values.

The Person in His Faith

The natural temptation for a sincere Christian is to believe that if we could Christianize our culture, its conflicting pluralisms would disappear and all would be drawn together in one happy community. Suffice it to say that only in the eschatological sense can we expect the total life of our people to be

brought under the reign of our Lord.

Short of this divine consummation, it is our Christian task to witness to Christ in all the phases of our personal and common life. This embraces the community which we have with all men as children of God. We must avoid the danger of easily identifying what belongs and what does not belong to the Kingdom of our Lord. In the matter of our cultural pluralism, we must allow for the possibility that individuals in one grouping may be as close to the will of God as individuals in another. It must also be acknowledged that many who are members of churches are largely governed by secular or quasi-Christian loyalties.

In religion, as in politics or culture, our goal is not one of facile conformity. God speaks through every one of his creatures. Because persons are persons and not social mechanisms or automatons, we must learn to meet them where they are, in all the depth and potential of their individual personalities.

This means that we must develop the Christian discipline of human identification and understanding. We must seek to establish community with those who do not know Christ, not because we are right and we want them to be like us, but because Christ is the Lord

and we want them to acknowledge him. This venture of identification calls for both faith and imagination.

The danger in a pluralistic society that is prevailingly "Christian" is that we represent to our fellow citizens not our Lord but our culture, or particular parts of it. In the political realm, we tend to identify democracy with Christianity, and our nation with God. It is not our task to proclaim our culture in the name of the gospel, but to witness to the gospel. This we must do in terms both personal and social. As for the prevailing culture, in some of its aspects it may be a witness to the gospel and in others a denial of the gospel.

Much of the present "religious revival" reflects a confusion between the Christian faith and cultural, social, or political loyalties. This is a problem that has faced the Christian enterprise from its first century. The church of Christ must be in the world, yet not of the world. It must not be content with an easy or a partial Christ, barely distinguishable from the model man of the day. In a time of profound social and cultural upheaval, when the souls of men are being shaken, the only gospel that will reach them in their total need as persons is the full gospel of Jesus Christ, the Lord of all ages and cultures.

III

Social Change and the Church

In the light of the contemporary social situation and its effects upon persons, what issues should be faced by the churches?

The material that follows will point briefly to theological premises, to areas of concern calling for future consideration, and to emerging central issues growing out of the present analysis.

Importance of Theology

Christian social analysis involves a dimension that transcends society itself. It is posited on a total view of life and history as we derive it from our Christian faith. It is rooted in our concept of God and man as revealed in Jesus Christ. For the churches, the task of social analysis can never be dissociated from the task of theology. While the Christian must use all the facts and insights of the social sciences, his distinctive contribution is that of the Christian gospel. Christianity is not primarily an ethic, but living faith. The faith expresses itself in outgoing love, responding to any human need.

The new relation between individuals and society raises issues concerning the nature of man and the ways of his personal and corporate obedience to God. The truths that theology seeks to state are constant, but the human situation in which

they must be applied is changing so rapidly that the basic premises must frequently be reformulated in order to speak to the condition in which people actually find themselves. This is a continuing task of all our churches.

It is recognized that in almost all churches there is a wide gap between the theological understanding of the clergy and that of the rank and file of the laity. Yet it is the laity whose daily lives in the midst of social change and pressure must reflect the life and thought of the church if the church is to make its full impact. The layman in his life and work is the church at grips with the world. Movements such as the Evangelical Academies in Germany and various ecumenical lay institutes suggest the growing importance which is being attached by church leaders in many countries to a lay understanding of theology.

Both the clarification and the wider dissemination and under-

standing of theological thinking are especially necessary. Society has become so complex that the simple maxims of an earlier day do not give guidance in concrete situations. There is a task here for the theologians and clergy. There is also a task and tremendous opportunity for the development of "lay theologians" who will be clear in their understanding of the faith as they seek to represent it in the world.

Areas for Consideration

Many practical questions concerning the social task of the churches are posed by this analysis. They deal with the churches' role in our culture, personal and social welfare in the life of the church, social action beyond the life of the church, the relation of church and state, the ecumenical dimension of the churches' social responsibility, and other related issues.

A specific issue not treated here is the question of the instrumentalities of society with which it is most strategic for the churches to work in order to influence social change. What is the distinctive contribution that the churches can make, and what are the forces of social structure and function that lend themselves best to the exercise of this contribution? Upon what issues or forces in society should the churches concentrate their energies? How can they be sufficiently imaginative and resilient to deal creatively with emerging social situations? What is the role of the church in setting standards and arousing concern? These are typical questions which call for further study.

Let us remember that the church

itself is a social manifestation. We cannot talk about the church and society as if the two were unrelated. The church is both a reflector and a molder of society. It is subject to many of the group pressures of society. A sociological examination of the church gives us many clues to the character of the society in which it is set, for the church partakes of the culture that surrounds it. At the same time, it helps to shape the culture. This interaction is a subject for consideration not only by theologians but by social scientists. There is need for more research, especially concerning the life and influence of the local parish in relation to the community of which it is a part.

Emerging Central Issues

However we divide our material, we find some central threads or patterns of underlying social development that cut across the categories into which this study is divided. We shall try to state some of these common trends which appear to be emerging in our changing society.

1. The new opportunities and perplexities of personal life in the face of growing depersonalization

We have noted the shifting relation between the individual and the numerous groups and social structures that tend to direct his life. He is faced with influences over which he has only a partial or even a negligible control. In his work he is involved increasingly in processes in which his personal role in relation to the total enterprise is unclear to him. In his leisure he is under the strong influence of the mass media,

for good or for ill. Even in his family life the centrifugal forces draw members of the family into other associations which sometimes seem to demand a loyalty above that to the family itself. The very size and complexity of the large urban centers in which most of our people live contribute to the process of depersonalization.

Different persons react differently to these influences. There are differences also according to age groupings and other social categories. Some persons find exhilaration and a new sense of significance in their group identification. Others feel that their individual significance is submerged, and they lose their sense of personal responsibility.

The depersonalization of life poses special problems for the Christian in relation to Christian vocation. How can he exercise his Christian influence when the controlling forces of life seem to make him individually ineffectual? In his daily work, leisure, and family life he is in danger of making one of two errors: either to become an ambivalent personality, with little integration between his religious life and the rest of his life; or to express his religious faith in a way that is irrelevant or ineffective. In either case, he lacks the sense of Christian vocation, based on a deep motivation and on an understanding both of his faith and of his role in society, which is essential to effective Christian witness and to satisfying Christian living.

It is notable that there are various attempts to cope with this problem. The increasing interest in re-

ligion is one evidence of concern, though the soundness of this response is varied. There is a growing interest among responsible people in "character," "standards," "usefulness." The new recognition and understanding of faith as an element in personality is encouraging.

The fact remains, however, that the growing depersonalization of American life confronts the Christian and the church with both opportunities and perplexities in relation to personal Christian vocation and Christian social action.

2. The relation of ethics to group responsibility

The proliferation of group life has led to a new social science devoted to a study of the nature of groups and of the ways groups function. Students of the subject accept and welcome the growth of groups as a basic medium of social functioning, and are seeking to develop the group process in a way that achieves group objectives, maintains group morale and integrity, and at the same time meets the needs of members as persons.

There is much to be learned about groups. What is the nature of a group as a generic reality? Is it simply the sum total of its individual members? In what sense can we speak of the redemption of groups? Especially in relation to large economic and political groups, we need a better understanding of their essential nature, structure, and functioning. This is a task of social analysis, but it also calls for the application of Christian insights.

In particular, we must be mindful of the possible perversion of group

life in which the group becomes an end in itself and the individual is submerged. We have seen the totalitarian prostitution of the group concept in the political, social, and economic spheres, leading in extreme cases to nationalist fascism, communist imperialism, or the garrison state. In our own country, the threats to civil liberties appear to be posited on the premise that the preservation of the group justifies depriving individuals of their rights. What do these perversions say to us about the Christian understanding of the person and the group in a society that operates more and more through group decisions?

A basic consideration for the Christian is the nature of the church itself as a group phenomenon. It is a special community through which we believe God speaks. In its ultimate sense, this community is the body of Christ. The full Christian life is not attainable apart from participation in this community. The freedom and acceptance that we know here are possible because of our submission to the church as the community of Christ. A theological examination of the nature of God's action through community may say something to us about how the Christian can be obedient to God through participation in other communities or groups which may or may not be Christian.

3. The pressure toward mass conformity

We have noted the subtle pressures toward mass conformity in the United States. The right of constructive dissent, the role of persons or groups who resist the popular

stream, and the place of voluntary organizations in American life are issues of far-reaching significance for our culture. The problem is to help people become aware of what is happening, to arouse their concern for the issue, and to find ways of reasserting the traditional American concern for the free expression of opinion.

From a Christian standpoint, freedom of dissent has a deeper rootage than that it is the American way of doing things. The effect of repression and fear upon persons is at the heart of our concern. The church cannot overlook the people who are yielding, consciously or unconsciously, to pressures of one kind or another to conform to the mass mentality.

But the church's responsibility extends beyond the individual victims of social forces. It is called to be socially alert, informed, and astute. It must seek to understand the societal factors that have undesirable effects in the lives of individuals, and exert its influence in changing those forces at their source. If the church is to perform its mission with persons, it will have to do it in part by dealing with social structures and pressures which contribute to mass conformity.

It must be recognized, of course, that not all pressures to conform are socially harmful. Social sanctions and public opinion are an important element in the maintenance of useful standards. Public morality can be an important support of personal morality. The public conscience may be more sensitive in some areas than the private conscience. Mass conformity must

always be judged in the light of the nature of its loyalties and of its effects on persons and society.

4. The effect of social change upon our scale of values

Our study suggests that new value systems are replacing some of the past. It is important to understand to what extent our American value and behavior patterns are changing.

Does the great improvement in our economic well-being mean materialistic preoccupations as against our concern for persons? Does our economy of abundance blind us to the needs of others? These questions are argued both ways: by those who feel that we have become obsessed with material blessings, and by those who feel that material well-being can and does open the way to a richer spiritual life for all.

We have noticed in our analysis the struggle between other sets of values: freedom versus conformity; sanctification of the *status quo* in economic and political areas versus the desire for change; the new consumer mentality as against the former conserving mentality; individual initiative and responsibility versus absorption in groups; resort to Government aid and controls in areas of private enterprise and public welfare where Government intervention formerly was negligible; the assessment of persons as persons on the basis of worth as against race—some good, some bad, and some an amalgam of both.

A result of the shifting system of values that is of particular concern to the churches is the confusion that it entails in the thinking and be-

havior of individual persons. Some observers feel that the scientific world view, and loyalty to the American way of life, have become modern substitutes for a higher religion. Many people have been uprooted from old value controls without a confident orientation to new ones. There is consequent uncertainty, anxiety, and sometimes pathological mental illness. On the other hand, many people find release, significance, and exhilaration in the new values and social mores. They feel that there is a new openness, freedom, sensitivity to social needs. There is a wide variety of reactions, but the one clear fact is that many of our value systems are changing.

The transcending concern of the church is people's faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Do they have a Christian view of history or is their real philosophy secular, in the sense of living their life apart from God? This is the crucial issue for the Christian faith in the face of changing values.

5. The concept of the state in relation to its citizens

The impingement of government on the lives of the people is a familiar subject of discussion today. We are aware of it in relation to Social Security, health and welfare programs, labor relations, the growth of the Federal payroll, taxation, military training, defense industries, Government research projects, public power, Congressional investigations, Government regulation of industry, commerce, and agriculture, racial integration, and other areas.

Some refer to this growth of Gov-

ernment activity in relation to the people as the mark of a "welfare state." There is no denying that the Federal Government is more consciously felt by the people than heretofore. Areas of life that formerly were governed by private controls or by a policy of laissez faire, now are subject to Government regulation.

The church is affected increasingly by Government activity. There is no interference with religion as such, but many long-accepted tenets of the relationship between church and state are now the subject of debate. Furthermore, the growing welfare programs of the state are considered by many to be in "competition" with those of the churches and of various private organizations. More subtle but equally important is the tendency for the state to enter areas of the life and thinking of individual persons that formerly were sacred to themselves.

Another concomitant of the involvement of the state in the lives of its citizens is the new concentration of power which thereby is reposed in the Government. This is a power-conscious age, in which great blocks or organizations of society such as business, labor, Government, and even the church achieve a certain power balance with other great units and develop an over-all stability within which constructive change can take place without undue social disruption. These forces are many in a democratic society, some of them visible and articulate, others intangible but nevertheless real.

In the United States during the past quarter century, the state itself in the form of its Government has

become a more active and potent contender in the struggle for power. The effects in the lives of its citizens undoubtedly have been good in many respects, but the question of principle is one of the major issues of the changing American scene.

6. Where is the revolution?

It has become commonplace to discuss the revolution that is taking place among hundreds of millions of the world's population. As we have noted in this analysis, it is a revolution not only in the forms and structures of society—cultural, political, economic, international—but in the minds of men. In a brief span of years it is replacing social systems and mental patterns in Asia, Africa, and Eastern Europe that had undergone little fundamental change for centuries.

This revolution in other parts of the world has placed its mark on America. Not that the United States is taking the path of these other nations—a path that in some respects we blazed in our own revolution nearly two hundred years ago—but the contemporary movement of history is so rapid and massive that even the strongest of nations cannot remain unaffected. We have cited earlier some of the areas of its impact upon our national life.

This revolution and two world wars, particularly the second one, have engendered a change of outlook on the part of most Americans toward the rest of the world.

But it is less widely recognized that we are having a revolution of our own. The developments of Western technology and automation, par-

ticularly in the United States, are among the basic forces that are changing the patterns of our life. We have analyzed some of these changes in this study. We have sought to find the common threads that permeate the diverse and often conflicting forces which seem to be at work. The single characteristic that appears to apply to all of them is that they are part of a common social revolution. Some may prefer the word evolution, but it is felt by many social scientists that the more drastic term is just as applicable now as it was during the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century.

Not least of the transformations in our society is that in the population itself. Its rapid increase, the shift of proportions among age groups, the concentrations of population in urban areas, the growth of suburbia, the great mobility of our people, the readjustments in inter-racial relations, these are among the fundamental changes in our population.

The deep-going shift of power from the person to groups, the transformations in systems of values, the rising standard of living, the increase of leisure, lengthening life, and the growing impingement of the state upon its citizens—these are social and cultural changes of the first magnitude. All of them are accompanied and in a measure caused by the revolution in technology. Technology makes some of our social changes possible and it makes some of them necessary.

Technology in and of itself is a morally neutral instrument. It has

facilitated many social and human advances that accord with the Christian gospel. It has brought us closer to the rest of the world. It is an aid to the churches in their own life of witness and service. At the same time, it has contributed to the sense of depersonalization, the uprootedness, of many of our people.

Like many far-reaching social phenomena, it has bestowed its blessings unevenly among the people, and adjustments do not keep abreast of the revolution in technology. It benefits some people and groups; it works to the disadvantage of others. It has developed a mechanized and consumption-oriented society. It has provided a degree of leisure unknown to the workingman in any previous social-economic system.

A striking fact about technology is that it affects so many people. In conjunction with the other social forces we have cited, it has a direct or indirect impact on practically everybody. Technology reaches the remotest hamlets today, and they cannot escape it if they try.

The spiritual and social problem arises here. Technology and social change affect everybody, but the millions of everybodies can do little about it. They can benefit or suffer from the great social movements of our time, but they seem unable to control them. This develops among some a new sense of social identification and concern, but among others it induces a gnawing uneasiness, a sense of impotence and insignificance. At a time when physical and financial security are maximized, the security that comes

from the personal direction of our destinies is much harder to achieve. Here again we see the interrelation between technology, the new group structuring of society, the shift in our systems of values, and even the enlargement of the role of the state.

The Christian faith also is revolutionary. It is God's revolution in

the minds and souls of men and in the relations of men to one another. Anything that touches the lives of men touches the heart of God. He loves them and wants them to live together as his loving children. It is the task of Christians and the church so to participate in the social revolution that they are instruments of God's revolution.



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